

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this Application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing Amendment, Claims 2-11 are pending in the present Application. Claim 1 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 7 and 8 have been recast in independent form. As the amendment to Claims 7 and 8 addresses only matters of form, Applicant respectfully submits that entering this amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is required. No new matter has been added.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issues: Claims 1-6 and 9-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Acero et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,604,839, hereinafter Acero); and Claims 7 and 8 have been identified as reciting allowable subject matter.

As the allowable subject matter of Claims 7 and 8 has been placed in independent form, and all other pending claims are dependent upon these claims, Applicant respectfully submits that all outstanding rejections have been rendered moot.

### CONCLUSION

If the Examiner believes any additional formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, by telephone, at the Examiner's convenience.

Consequently, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application, including Claims 2-11, is patently distinguished over the prior art, in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

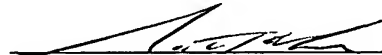
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